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THE

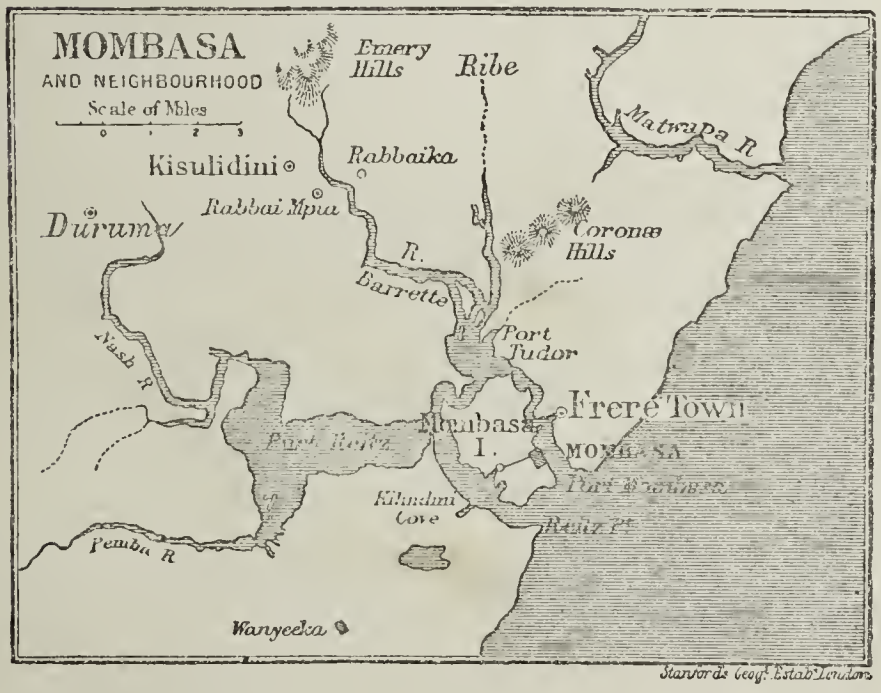
MOMBASA MISSION

OF THE

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

CONTAINING

LETTERS FROM BISHOP ROYSTON OF MAURITIUS,
MR. J. R. STREETER, &c.



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NOTE.

In 1844, Dr. Krapf arrived at Mombasa, a small island in an estuary on the eastern coast of Africa, 150 miles north of Zanzibar, and began the East Africa Mission of the Church Missionary Society. He established a station at a place called Rabbai, fifteen miles inland, and called it Kisulutini; and from thence he and Mr. Rebmann made their important journeys into the interior. For nearly thirty years Rebmann remained at his post, but the visible results of his work were small. In 1874, the Society sent out the Rev. W. S. Price to enlarge the operations of the Mission in connexion with the efforts of the British Government for the suppression of the Slave-Trade. A piece of land was purchased on the mainland close to Mombasa, and a station established upon it, which was named Frere Town. About 150 African Christians from Bombay, formerly liberated slaves, who had been educated in the Society's African Institution at Nasik, were brought over to form the nucleus of the settlement; and some 500 slaves rescued by British ships have been sent there by H.M. Consul-General at Zanzibar. Some of these are settled on little homesteads of their own at Kisulutini, at which place also several Native Wanika families are joining the colony. There is also a small Native Christian community at Giriama, fifty miles to the north.

Mr. Price was succeeded in the charge of the Mission by the Rev. J. A. Lamb, and Commander Russell, R.N., and they in their turn by Mr. J. R. Streeter.

Contributions to the Church Missionary Society are received at the Society's House, Salisbury Square, London; or at the Society's Bankers, Messrs. Williams, Deacon, and Co., 20, Birchin Lane, London. Post Office Orders payable to Edward Hutchinson, Esq., Lay Secretary.

THE MOMBASA MISSION.

I.

Letter from Bishop Royston, of Mauritius.

H.M. Consulate-General, Zanzibar,
September 18, 1878.

You will have heard that, through the kindness of Rear-Admiral Corbett, I was at length enabled to get across hither from Mauritius in the flag-ship *Undaunted*, and so comply with the Committee's invitation received last year, that I should visit, at an early opportunity, the Society's new and interesting Mission at Frere Town, Mombasa.

After a pleasant stay in the Seychelles *en route*, in the course of which I went up with the Admiral and a party of the officers of the *Undaunted* to Mr. Chancellor's Industrial Home for Released Africans at Capuchin, Mahé, we—for Mrs. Royston accompanied me—arrived here on the afternoon of Thursday, the 29th ultimo, and next day took up our abode in the hospitable house of Dr. and Mrs. Kirk.

The arrival of the Admiral in H.H. Sultan Burghash's dominions was recognized with all distinction; and, it being the first day of the Ramazan fast, the fire of the Fort-guns, in reply to the salute of the flag-ship, was long sustained by innumerable muskets as the sun went down. On Saturday the Sultan held a durbar for the Admiral and his suite, whom he received with great courtesy. Having the honour to be present, I took the opportunity of thanking him, in the name of the Society, for his various acts of kindness and friendliness to the missionaries connected with this part of East Africa; and on the following Tuesday evening, when he entertained some forty or fifty European guests at a very costly and prolonged dinner, there was the same expression of courtesy and friendliness

towards the English and our work. I was honoured by a seat next him on his left. The general feeling here seems to be that his Highness has a very difficult part to take, which, but for the firm and wise guidance of the Consul-General, and the manifested purpose of the British people to put down the Slave-Trade, he would find it probably beyond his power to maintain. As it is, the trade is smothered—at any rate on the coast; but it would break out again if the withstanding power were withdrawn.

I had the pleasure of spending part of Sunday in Bishop Steere's interesting institution at Kingani, which I again visited in the course of the week, to see its school and industrial work. Both this and the similar institution at Mbwenni (for girls) seem admirably conducted by zealous and self-denying agents, who have in the Bishop a sympathizing and laborious director. The former had some sixty lads; the latter some forty girls and young women, as well as a good number of freed slaves in the shamba or compound. The Mission has sustained many heavy losses; but I should think it has accomplished a good deal already in training the young, not to speak of the Bishop's varied and scholarly linguistic labours. He and all his Mission have shown to us the greatest kindness; and I have learned a great deal from him of the nature of the work on the coast.

While speaking of this, may I suggest how very important it would be for the various societies who have agents in this part, to direct them to confer with those of other Missions as to translation, &c., in the Suaheli language? From all I can learn, there should be no reason why the slightly differing dialectic shades of north and south should not be merged into one tongue, to be "fixed," as has often been the case, by Christian literature. This Suaheli seems so easy, so effective, and so wide-spread, that it might be an organ of speech to the very heart of the continent.

On Thursday we once more had the experience of the ready helpfulness of the naval officers in the permission of Captain Wharton, of the surveying ship *Fawn*, to embark in his vessel for Mombasa, which we reached next day at noon, a distance of about 160 miles. But for this opportunity we should have found it next to impossible to get thither, as the *Highland Lassie* had left before we arrived; and a long delay must have occurred before she would be here. The *Fawn* was happily at Zanzibar, and was returning to her work off Pemba. I feel it is but just

to add, how ready Captain Sullivan, of the receiving vessel, the *London*, and the other officers on this station, have ever been to help the agents of Missions in any emergency.

And now we were at Mombasa, the place whose noble missionaries, Krapf and Rebmann, made me long, when I first offered myself to the Society, to be allowed to join them in their work. How little I thought of ever visiting it in present circumstances, and of seeing and hearing what I was privileged to see and hear!

You will often have heard of the great beauty of the scenery—the beautiful creek affording a splendid harbour inside the island which you pass to the left; the sloping and now well-occupied land of Frere Town facing you; the ferry-boat, carrying a constant succession of Wanika and other mainland dwellers to the market of this fortified old town, who, with their bows and arrows and burdens of produce, are ever passing through this Christian village, seeing, one trusts, and hearing too, much which will at least conciliate them for future intercourse. On the left, as we anchored, was Mr. Lamb's beautiful up-stair house, with its surrounding of the most magnificent mango-trees which I have ever seen; in front, three other houses (at present occupied by Messrs. Streeter, Handford, and Harris), and many thatched buildings of various shapes and dimensions. Still further round to the left spread the beautiful creek, winding its way navigably for some ten or more miles inland. On the beach itself was the *Highland Lassie*, under the process of outer painting. On the right the shore spread on to where Mrs. Krapf and three little infants—her own and those of Messrs. Sparshott and Chancellor—lie buried, a precious occupancy, I trust, of the great mainland in days gone by. Since then, far, far away inland, lie other precious guarantees of eventual success in the great struggle for this (so to speak) last-born of continents.

I ought to have mentioned that at Zanzibar we found Mr. and Mrs. Handford, of the Mombasa Mission School. Mr. Handford accompanied us to Mombasa, and rendered us kindly service throughout. Our arrival at Frere Town being wholly unexpected, Mr. Streeter, the able and very effective Lay Superintendent of the Mission, was absent at Kisulidini; but we met him in the course of the evening returning in the Mission cabin-boat *Alice* down the beautiful but strongly-running creek. On landing, Captain Wharton kindly inspected the *Highland Lassie*,

with the view of seeing if she seemed at this season in sufficiently good trim to run over to the Seychelles with us, should no other course be open. The wind being favourable, her gear was thought, perhaps, not too worn; but advice was given as to the early renewal of sails and cordage. We then proceeded at once to the school—a large, long, masonry building, thatched with cocoa-nut leaves, and at present used also for Divine Service. The children, about eighty-five in number—mostly released slaves—began to sing some English songs and hymns, with greater accuracy, harmony, and expression, not to say melodiousness, than I think I have ever heard in any Mission school. This is owing to Mr. Handford's use of the Tonic Sol-fa system, and the richness of the African voice. They also sang some Suaheli hymns, read simple English, and showed that there was not lacking good material for careful teaching and training.

The tide and southerly wind not allowing the *Fawn* to get out of harbour before the next morning, we dined with Mr. Streeter on board the *Fawn*, which left before day-break.

To our regret we found that there was no missionary clergyman either at Frere Town or Kisulidini—Mr. Menzies, my old pupil, whom I had hoped to meet, not having arrived, and Mr. Binns having gone home for priest's orders, and to be married. But we could not have been more kindly received, and arrangements for Divine Service and for the Holy Communion were at once made for the next day, Sunday.

The Saturday was spent as follows:—First, early prayers in Suaheli at 6.30 in the school-room, attended by the children, the members of the Mission, and an increasing number of the "Bombay" Africans. This was conducted by the catechist, George David, in a very nice and apparently interesting way; the singing and responses leaving little to be desired by the outward ear. After being introduced to the various Native agents of the large and varied establishments, I went round the shamba with Mr. Streeter, visiting the separate villages of the Makuas, Nyapus, Yaos, and "Bombays," the workshops, stores, &c., and was much pleased with the general good order which prevailed, and with Mr. Streeter's pleasant greetings at the hands of the people. Most of the freed men, however, had already gone to their daily work, having assembled at the "office," where a short prayer is offered before separating. This, with the early Sunday morning service, Sunday-schools, and Wednesday evening classes, forms the principal religious

instruction of the freed men at present. The women are visited in their villages: but I hope more will soon be done for the men, though it will be less easy to do more now than at the beginning.

At noon we went to call on the Wali, the Governor of Mombasa, to whom the Sultan had sent a kind letter of friendly introduction, and who both then (amid the great people of the place) behaved most pleasantly, and also afterwards when he returned the call officially on Monday. Mrs. Royston remained, in the meanwhile, in the unoccupied Mission-house of the town, once the chief habitat of the earlier missionaries. We all then visited Hamis, the Arab, who rendered Mr. Price so much service in the beginning, and who now begged us all to enter his house, and introduced his family to us.

Returning to Frere Town, Mrs. Royston and I took up our quarters in the unoccupied (but furnished) house assigned to the clergyman of the station, as being the most convenient arrangement, and had two "Bombays" given us as attendants, one of whom, Matthew, had helped to bring down Dr. Livingstone's remains to the Coast. And so we found ourselves, *bien installés*, as they say in Mauritius, in that lovely spot whose beauties carried me back to Cottayam and other lovely stations in S.W. India.

Sunday was a busy day. At eight was the Suaheli service for the ex-slaves, conducted, as to repetition of texts, &c., much as a Tinnevelly service for inquirers at a village station. About 180 were present. I afterwards addressed them from John viii., "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," George David acting as interpreter. Then, again, the Sunday-school at 9.30, taken with loving zeal by Mr. Streeter, at whose request I addressed the children and teachers. At 11 was a service wholly in English, which I took, preaching from Rom. xii. 1; and afterwards administered the Holy Communion to thirty-three persons, mostly "Bombay" Christians and the Mission agents. The outward conduct at the services was all that could be desired, and throughout the attention was well sustained. From all I hear I think that there is more life among the poor people who come from Bombay than was at first manifested.

After an early dinner there was a second Sunday-school for the children, and at 4 a Suaheli service for all by the catechist.

In the evening I went to see Mr. Harris, the superintendent of the Rabbai Mission, who, I fear, from what I heard from

himself and others, finds his own and his wife's constitution quite unequal to the requirements of Africa. He has been suffering from fever, and was staying at Frere Town; but I doubt the probability of his being able to do much work in Africa.

Monday was spent in many interesting employments. In the morning I had a class of English-speaking men to prepare for confirmation—an engagement which I found very pleasant on several subsequent mornings. Mrs. Royston similarly took some young women and boys; the catechists took the rest. At 10 was the Wali's return visit of ceremony, followed by that of several other elders, &c., from Mombasa. Then the examination of the various classes of Mr. Handford's school—all most encouraging. The rest of the day was spent with the agents of the Mission, who on Monday evening meet for conference and prayer. The general feeling was one of quiet hopefulness, amid many difficulties and disappointments. Tuesday brought the same early Suaheli service at 6.30, and the classes for confirmation.

About noon Mr. Streeter and I started for Kisulidini (Rabbai), ascending the beautiful winding creek in the cabin-boat for about ten miles. On disembarking we walked, or rode on donkeys, through very pleasant scenery, now traversed by a good road made by Mr. Price, from the creek to Rabbai. The country at first reminded me of Devonshire; afterwards, when we got to the range of hills, it had more of the appearance of Coonoor. But, excepting some gigantic cactus-trees, baobabs, &c., I was disappointed in the size of the trees. I was also informed that the character of the soil—though, if well tilled, sufficiently productive—is yet disappointing to the agriculturist, and that, except at such stations as Frere Town and Kisulidini, where are freed slaves, labour is very difficult to secure. The climate was to me very enjoyable on this occasion, though indeed it seemed all that could be desired at Frere Town also at this season, owing to the delicious and almost always permanent sea breeze.

We passed a small Mission shamba at a little place called Buné, with a lovely prospect. A few "Bombays" and others live here with a catechist, but he was unfortunately out. Ere long the Kisulidini mission buildings appeared, beautifully "set upon a hill," and in due time we arrived. At the entrance to the village the catechist, William Jones, came out to escort us,

with the children of the school, some eighteen, I think, in number, who sang a hymn in Suaheli to the tune of "Onward, Christian soldiers," &c., very prettily. On entering, we found the village "square" lined on one side by the men, headed by the aged convert, Abraham Abe Gunja, and on the other by the women. All saluted us very heartily, and then, after a few words to one and another, we all went into the very neat little chapel, forming one side of the square of building of which Mr. Rebmann's house formed the opposite.

It was a very interesting scene—the chapel full of "Bombays," freed slaves, and Wanika; the service, a few prayers in Suaheli, and an address translated for me by the catechist, with hymns, &c., very heartily; and all the associations of the place above even average mission interest. What, I could not help saying, would not good old Mr. Rebmann have said to have seen what we saw that day? Others—he chiefly—"had sowed, and we had now entered into their labours." After arranging for next morning's service, and explaining why I had come, Mr. Streeter and I walked round the village, which is most nicely and conveniently laid out, till "the road which leads to the Lake" ended, and we returned to the Mission-house under the beautiful moon. I was much reminded of other, but similar, work in Mundakayam and Melkavu, in Travancore, to which I was introduced by your zealous missionary, Henry Baker, now many years ago. Thus, wherever the story of the cross is truly told—Europe, Asia, or Africa—does the living Saviour gather the people to Him. May it please Him in due time to open up a path to every tribe of this dark continent for the entrance of His life-giving Word! And surely, but for "the cattle-lifting Masai" who at present intervene, "the way to the Lake" lies—rather will lie ere long—from Mombasa direct through to Uganda.

Next morning, Wednesday, the large musical bell, swung in a mango-tree, summoned us all to early prayers. The room once more was full, and I addressed the people, through the catechist, on the nature of the confirmation service, for which I invited those who were qualified to come to Frere Town on Friday. The baptism of the first Wanika *woman* at Rabbai, with her three children, followed, and added not a little to the importance of the occasion. After a few words with the old patriarch, Abe Gunja, whose wife is still a pagan, we separated, having certain cases of discipline to attend to. But we pre-

sently found out that three more Wanika women, with the adult son of one of them, the wife of the chief "Medicine man" of the tribe, were most earnest in their desire to be baptized. We accordingly adjourned to the catechist's neat house, and found these people—one of them having her children around her in a very interesting group, and all deeply solemnized in manner. Indeed, I never remember seeing a group of Natives so manifestly touched by the Spirit of God, or a little assembly in which the presence of the Saviour seemed more deeply felt. When closely questioned through the catechist, they all, in individual but common sentiments, and with most evident sincerity, confessed their deep conviction of sin, their earnest trust in the Saviour, of whom they had now long heard, and of whose work and words they had been well instructed, and of whose holy faith they now earnestly desired to make a public profession. The fear was lest, as their husbands, though often at the services, are not yet prepared to take up the cross, the poor women might have to follow them ere long into the midst of heathendom, far from all the means of grace. But, even so, they promised to continue faithful unto death; and presently, two of the husbands coming in, and expressing their full concurrence in the wish of the women to be with their children baptized, and promising also to remain near, if not in the midst of the Christian neighbourhood, this difficulty was removed. And from what passed I quite hope to hear that ere long both those men and the pagan wife of the young man alluded to will have publicly professed the faith of Christ. Another old man present was very anxious to be baptized with his son, a lad of seven or eight years of age, but his knowledge being as yet imperfect, it was arranged that he should await the arrival of the Rev. Mr. Binns, much, however, to the poor man's disappointment. After much conversation with them, and prayer, it was arranged to have a special service for the reception of these poor people at one o'clock, and Mr. Streeter and I proceeded to our long-postponed breakfast at noon, full of satisfying joy at what we had seen and heard. To him especially, who had spoken of old to several of these people, it was an occasion of deep thankfulness not to be forgotten; and the subsequent solemn service, at which the four adults and ten children were baptized in the midst of a nice congregation of some fifty or sixty people, was a season of more than usual impressiveness to us all.

Before it began I publicly received back two poor women into the congregation who had, under peculiar circumstances, gone astray, and desired to make open acknowledgment of their error. They seemed truly penitent. Their two little infants were of the number of the ten. The women repeated a statement of their fault at my dictation, asked pardon, promised for the future full consistency of conduct, and the congregation expressed their acquiescence. So ended a service which I shall always regard as memorable, close to the bed-room where good Mr. Rebmann had so long lived and laboured with so little of apparent success.

As we had to return that afternoon to Frere Town, we had only time to visit the graves of Mr. Rebmann and Mr. Remington, and to arrange for some little memorial being placed over their remains, and then we started back, escorted by several of the leading people of the settlement. This now includes some 170 in number, of whom eighteen are Christian Wanika; the rest are "Bombays," and freed or protected slaves.

It was past eight o'clock before we reached Frere Town, very thankful for the scenes we had witnessed of moral and natural beauty.

Thursday was occupied with the confirmation classes, with long conference with the catechist, both as to his own reading and work, and the individual members of the congregation, especially the candidates. I was much pleased with the catechist's practical management of a very peculiar charge, without immediate clerical supervision, and trust that he will qualify himself, by systematic study, for admission to the Native Pastorate ere long. Indeed, I would venture to recommend that special efforts be also made by one of the English agents to train the teachers of the schools, and from the beginning to make vigorous efforts to prepare a Native mission agency. I do not think there is a lack of material for this purpose, and the standard of the South Indian pastorate might be attained ere long by two or three of the catechists, as far as I could judge. The absence of any ordained missionary, and my wish that he should study a little more first, alone prevented me from acceding to the expressed wish that Catechist George David should be ordained deacon, without additional pay from the Mission.

In the course of the day some of the interesting Giriama

converts came down to take part in the confirmation service. I was much pleased with them, but would earnestly recommend that a catechist be sent to live among them; as with their little knowledge, and the small stock of Christian literature to which even their best man can have access, they are practically left as "sheep without a (human) shepherd." But they showed a marked independence of Christian character, and seemed steadfast in meeting for prayer and worship. But is it not *our* duty to do all in our power to feed and tend these members of the flock?

In the evening I walked over to see Mrs. Krapf's grave, and the adjoining ones to which I referred, and found them nicely cared for—facing the old house in Mombasa, and awaiting the call which will, I trust, awaken many more in the neighbourhood to a blessed resurrection in Him who for Africa also is "the firstfruits of them that sleep." Thence I went in the opposite direction, through the settlement, to the general cemetery, and found a monument recently put up to Mrs. Russell, and not a few mounds of others recently called away—all in nice keeping, but in an enclosure which will apparently soon need enlargement.

Friday, the next day, and the last of my pleasant stay on the coast, was fully occupied with very varied engagements. There was the usual Suaheli service at 6.30, followed at 10 by the crowded assembly for the Confirmation. Much care had been taken to see that only those whose character and attainments seemed suitable should be accepted, so that this first occasion might be not undesirable as a standard for the future. Hence the catechists exercised a very discriminating choice; but I found it necessary, in the peculiar circumstances of the case, to receive some who were only acquainted with an abbreviated form, rather than the whole, of the Ten Commandments, owing to some difficulties connected with their translation. There were also, naturally, some who were already communicants.

The great bell—hourly struck, near the landing-place and office, night and day, by one of the settlement watchmen—loudly summoned us to the school-chapel, which was soon filled with not far short of 400 worshippers, including Messrs. Wakefield and Seden, of the Wesleyan Mission at Ribé, the latter of whom was to proceed with us back to Zanzibar. The service began with the reception of an excommunicate member, as at Rabbai; then a hymn; the baptismal service, when four were

baptized; then the confirmation service, with, I fear, a somewhat long address by myself to the various classes present, translated by Catechist David, as indeed were all the more important passages of the prayers and services throughout. Then the female candidates, from Frere Town twelve, from Rabbai thirteen, and Giriama one, were confirmed, followed by the males, fourteen, eleven, and three, from those stations respectively—in all fifty-four. The last of those who were confirmed were old Abraham Abe Gunja, of Rabbai, and his worthy son Isaac, who knelt side by side to receive the imposition of hands and the united prayers of pastor and people for their "continuance as Christ's for ever, and daily growth in His Holy Spirit until they come to His eternal kingdom." It was, I think, a moving sight to most of us, and we were full of thanksgiving to Him who had wrought it all.

After another hymn, the Communion Service was begun, and, after a short address to the communicants, the rest of the congregation retired at the end of the prayer for the militant Church of Christ. Some sixty remained for the administration, including most of the Rabbai and Giriama people.

The whole service was most devoutly attended to, and the responses and hymns very hearty and melodious. Altogether it was a day to be much remembered by us all—certainly by myself. My chief regret was that those to whose labours, humanly speaking, so much was owing, could not join with us, and that no ordained missionary is at present on the spot. But this latter want will, I hope, be now soon supplied, for such a one is much wanted, both at Frere Town and Rabbai. I would willingly, had my duties in Mauritius not forbidden it, have remained some weeks in this interesting and promising Mission, the visit to which has filled my heart with gratitude to God. I can quite understand the proverb that those who have drunk African water must taste it again.

We gave a treat to the children in the afternoon, with prizes and presents, and two oxen were killed for the strangers and others of the settlement, who made the rest of the day one of universal holiday, each in his own way and temperament. A pleasant meeting of the agents in our quarters, at which our friends from Ribé were also present, and joined us in prayer and conference, brought this happy day to its conclusion, and at four o'clock next morning we were on board the *Highland Lassie*,

to proceed, as we did very comfortably in three days, to Zanzibar on our way homeward.

We have felt it a great privilege to become somewhat acquainted with the work on this great African coast, and to have found, both here and there, many kind friends and much Christian sympathy and aid throughout.

II.

Letters from Mr. J. R. Streeter.

Mr. Streeter went out in January, 1877, as an industrial agent, with especial view to the agricultural development of the colony, by which it might, in the course of time, become self-supporting. The return home of Mr. Lamb and Captain Russell left him at the head of the Mission.

April 23rd, 1878.

I have been up to Rabbai, and have had my old field, which was covered with grass over six feet high, begun, and since there have been four acres planted. From what I could see of the cotton there, it turned out better even than here, and I have had a very good report of the samples left at home; but the time is not ripe yet for cultivating it by a C.M.S., as the Natives won't go in for it themselves. I had at once the people there put on half-time again, and told them they must make the most of it for a few months, as they really would have to support themselves. Jones seems to have the people well in hand, and, as far as I could see, great credit is due to him for the order the place seems in. I was much pleased with the good attendance at morning services and classes, several Wanika being present.

I have managed to get in here nearly five acres of rice and two of pogo, and the seven acres of mahogo are doing well. My little farm is nearly complete, and next week I hope to get farther away, settle out the freed slaves to cultivate for themselves, and take up a portion for the Mission, on which they can work their half-time for a while.

We had a nice gathering in our new school (partly the gift of Mr. Lamb) on Easter Sunday; just got it finished in time. Mr. Handford gave the address, and the children sang that sweet anthem, "How beautiful upon," &c. It is a sound, serviceable building; will answer all the purposes of a church for some time to come.

I have had many congratulatory visitors, and last week the Walis of Mombasa and Melinde came over. They were interested in the new plough. (When going to show it to two other Arabs who came over, I saw there had been an earlier visitor, as all round were leopard's tracks—he evidently having been puzzled to make out whether it was friend or foe. Foe, I think, was the answer, for a sign of the times is that George David has two oxen and plough of his own; and, although his head is very round, it is one of the longest about here, and I hope others will follow.) The governors stayed nearly two hours. Took them over to the schools. The Wali of Melinde and his three sons were surprised; he wants to come again to see the saw-bench at work.

The "difficulty" with which our next extract begins is the finding such employment for the freed slaves as may keep them in some connexion with the Mission without charging it with their maintenance. Some of them have been settled a few miles off at a place called Mawani, where they are doing well, cultivating on their own account; but Mr. Streeter fears the moral results of entire separation from Frere Town in the case of people so lately rescued from bondage and ignorance.

August 10th, 1878.

Is there any way out of the difficulty? I only see one, and that is to start an industry: but what? Cotton-growing, as I have said before, would not answer. The people are not ripe for it (although I have applications from two big Arabs for seed, which I am giving them), and there is no dependence on the weather (see average rainfall for the important month of May, 1876, sixteen inches; 1877, fifteen; 1878, four only, and we have had only one day's rain from June 14th to August 4th). Things were burnt up. Pongo, kunudi, &c., are three times their ordinary prices, many getting absolutely nothing from their shambas, the Governor of Mombas especially suffering. Where our new plough had been was a bright exception, and goes to prove over again the well-known fact of deep cultivation being the best, and gives me great hopes. When we do get a fair season, the people say it is a proper "Jemby;" and the other day, when ploughing with four oxen, I had the chief of the Arabs and twenty others following up and down a new three-acred field. I wish we could have photographed the party and the field also, for I suppose such a sight was never seen before in this part of the world, as fifty loads of manure in heaps upon one. It rejoiced my heart, and it will soon, I trust, help to fulfil that beautiful 65th Psalm—one might almost call it the "Farmers' Psalm"

But I am wandering from the industry. What is it to be—tanning and dyeing? Not yet, although I hope some day to do a little in that way. Have just made a nice bridle with native cured leather, which cost 2*s*. 6*d*. only, and I have much pleasure in enclosing you a piece of cloth dyed on the premises. It seems a good wearing and fast colour, and we can get any amount for the labour. At the first opportunity I will endeavour to send home a sample, to see if anything can be done with it.

But this is off the industry again. What is it to be? The only thing I see at all likely to answer, besides being a good thing for the country, is an oil press. While other things are dear this year, cocoa-nuts are very plentiful (a Father's mercy to the poor people here), and I think we might venture. Tapping, our engineer, knows the work well, and Tom Smith, who knows nearly about everything, knows it also. Tom is a fine fellow. He only works half-time for the Mission now, but does all he can to help me—in fact, all the heads do—George, Ishmael, and Isaac: we are a happy family.

At Rabbai I have four acres of rice looking beautiful. Have sent the last batch of freed slaves, received a month ago, right straight away there to help look after it, and, when they get a little reconciled, to settle there.

In a further letter from Mr. Streeter, he thinks the oil-press plan may be deferred for a while, as a large shamba (plantation) has been secured adjoining the Frere Town estate, which will employ many of the people.

The following is Mr. Streeter's Annual Report to the Committee:—

December 28th, 1878.

In reviewing the work of the year there can be no doubt that, in spite of many difficulties, progress has been made. First, with regard to the spiritual improvement of the people. Twelve months ago, amongst the freed slaves, there seemed a great indifference to anything that was good, and their self-denying pastor, the Rev. J. A. Lamb, and George David spoke to almost empty benches. Now nearly all are present at their Sunday morning service, which commences at eight, and they listen very attentively both to George and myself; and as we rest on the "seed-sowing promise," we know that our labour is not in vain, and our Heavenly Father graciously allows us to see some signs of coming fruit. Here there are seven or eight who have learnt a little of God's Word, and wish to be baptized, and by their blameless lives show their wish to be sincere (and when at Rabai the other week, one of the freed slaves from Buni got the catechist to send his name over, saying how he also wished to be. He is a good fellow—one of the first workmen I had given me last year—and when I went over to see him, his face beamed with delight as he told me he loved God, wished to serve Him better, showed me his neat little house he has just put up, his newly-born babe and his good wife, who wishes to be baptized also, and how he was to be called Thomas. Mr. Binns has promised to have a talk with him). Then, in the afternoon, they attend well the little room I had built for them close to their own homes; they used not to come to afternoon class at all scarcely, even after I got them to attend the morning, and one had to go gently; but there, so many came that the room would not hold them. It was the same to a class George held on Friday evenings (besides the regular Wednesday service in school), so I asked who would volunteer to help to enlarge it. Over forty said they would give a day, and the result is that they have now a nice large hut 32 × 17 feet, which they call their own. This, I believe, is the first work for the Mission they have done freely, and although it is a very small thing, "scarcely a flea-bite," 'tis a step towards the spirit of your sympathizing letter, which from my heart I wish could be carried out in its entirety, but fear that it will be many a day on this coast before such a future will be realized.

With regard to the Bombay boys, I feel that I cannot say much. One month they seem to do the right, and the meetings are fairly attended. Another month 'tis the reverse. This does not include the heads, of whom I cannot speak too highly, and there are some of the others who are ornaments to their Christian profession. Their Institute, opened three months back, is doing its work fairly, and I hope will show those who have gone astray there is a better way of spending their evenings than going in the shambas. The temptations for these poor people here are very great. All round the place are toddy-shops, where some run long scores and settled monthly, and there are Moabitish women in abundance with this, and Mombas close by. It

seems to me, speaking with all reverence, that we are planted almost in the jaws of hell, and we shall need much strength given us to prevail. Sometimes it almost makes one despair, but another thought nerves us on. "We know that we are not alone," and the blacker the night the more need of a light, and that we are a light to the country around is not to be doubted. Inquiries about us there have been far and wide; of some you have heard; and if only two or three noble-minded missionaries could be spared, the door is open for much work in this darkened land.

Of the Rabai people and Wanika Christians you have heard both from the good Bishop and myself. The great work seems going on there, and those who made a good profession to him keep steadfast. Now their old missionary, Mr. Binns, is amongst them, we may expect to hear of more souls being added to the Church, and many to the settlement, which has more than doubled in numbers during the past year.

Mr. Handford will be writing you about the dear children, but with regard to the Sunday-schools I must say the progress seems great. Not two years ago, when I took the first class, they could scarcely read, and could not find the chapter. Now they read as well as an ordinary class at home, and begin to turn to different parts of the Bible, answer questions in English fairly, and when I ask them if they will learn their verse in school, as is the custom of necessity here, my boys always say, "No; we will read and listen to you, and learn verse in dinner-time;" and during the past six months only three boys have failed in saying them well, and they remember them during the week. As they know of the way of salvation, and seem trying to please the Saviour, one cannot but think, with that beautiful hymn—

> "That many dear children are gathering there,
> For of such is the kingdom of heaven."

With regard to the place progressing temporally, it will scarcely do to look to the "revenue returns." As our only source of income has decreased, no doubt it has made a difference to some families; but the town is thriving. It would be no small thing for a village in England to have twelve new houses added to it; here that number of freed slaves have come out from the mission-rooms, and built good ones for themselves in plots of ground allotted to each, which I allow them to call their own, subject to the conditions of conforming to rules, &c. Others are beginning to build, and some have remodelled their old ones. Altogether the place looks different. They take a pride in their new homes; and as one takes a walk round, which I do every day after work is over, it seems to me a pretty picture to see the "once a slave" sitting by his own cot, mending the dear wife's gown, or fondling the "little black diamond," while she is busy with the evening meal. There are some happy homes here, and although I have often heard it said of the Africans, they have no real love for their children or one another, I don't believe it; for the way some mothers care for their little ones, now they live in hopes of *seeing them grow up with them*, is surprising; and I have seen, more than once, when the husbands have been going on journeys, some one on the shore taking what sometimes proves, alas! "the last fond look."

We have also, I am glad to say, been enabled to enlarge our borders. In the spring we were on an enclosed piece of some eighty acres of bad ground; but now, after securing twenty acres of better ground, it gives us clear right of

way through our own shambas, right out to the wastes where our men spend half their week, and a few of them all their time, in cultivating for themselves. I have taken possession of a large piece out there in the name of the C.M.S., for future development, as the Swahili are quite alive to their own interests; and when we move, some one else tries to be beforehand. Now, if we can only keep peace within our own borders, I do not think there is much to fear; and by this time next year I hope to see the place well established, and the people less dependent on the Mission. One thing, the weather will have much to do with it, for I am afraid, if we get another dry season as last, our people will lose heart entirely; but we must make great efforts for another two or three years, for the Governor of Mombas says that if the English keep so strong here, and the Sultan will not allow them to catch slaves again, the Arabs will be unable to live here, and be obliged to go back to their own country. So there is hope for poor Africa.

And now, as I began this, so I must conclude with humble thankfulness to Almighty God for having preserved this place amidst wars and rumours of wars all round during the absence of a clergyman, the forced absence of the other members of the Mission, trials without and troubles within, "but out of them all hath the Lord delivered us."

III.—THE SCHOOL.

Letter from Mr. J. W. Handford.

Mr. Handford is the schoolmaster at Frere Town. The following is his Annual Letter:—

December 31*st*, 1878.

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the result of the Christmas examination has been more satisfactory than the previous ones. I conducted it on the strictest principles of a Government examination—indeed, I think I have been more strict than a Government inspector, not passing some whom an official probably would have done—my object in such cases being to stir up a careless child into more activity, and also that the teachers might give their attention more specially to such.

The subject in which the whole school was most backward last year was reading, but this year it is the most successful subject. This is mainly owing to the excellent reading-books which I received at the commencement of the present year. With the improvement in reading there has been a marked advance in the dictation.

As last year, all the children attend the morning school from 8.30 a.m. to 12. In the afternoon the girls attend the sewing-class, and the elder boys are employed by Mr. Streeter, principally in agricultural pursuits. During the year several boys have been removed from the school to permanent work, and, on the reopening of the school on New Year's Day, it will be advisable to remove more.

In addition to the above four classes, I have an infant class, numbering twenty-two, so that the sum total of the daily morning attendance is 108.

Answers to written questions in Scripture, geography, grammar, and arithmetic were given in writing by the first and second classes, and to see the full slates of the first-class—all very fair English—was most encouraging.

In accordance with the wish of the Committee, it is my purpose to make Kisuahili the chief element in the secular department. That this will be no difficult task I am confident—God granting me His blessing—for, if they have made such progress in a foreign language, their advance in their own, with their present knowledge, will, I calculate, be very speedy.

School for the future will only be conducted in the morning, the afternoon being devoted to industrial employment.

I must not close this letter without a word respecting the children spiritually. In children so young, and at present under such control, we cannot, of course, write very definitely; but I am not going too far when I say that we have every cause to hope, and very little to fear, that the greater part are striving to live up to their teaching. Their earnest attention during the daily Scripture-lesson, their ready answers, their love for the Bible, and their devoutness in prayer, plainly bespeak, I think, a sowing of the good Word in their hearts.

IV.—KISULUTINI STATION.

Letter from the Rev. H. K. Binns.

Kisulutini, or Rabai, is Mr. Rebmann's old station, fifteen miles inland. Mr. Binns was there for sixteen months in 1876-7. Last year he returned to his post, and writes as follows:—

November, 1878.

This Mission originally was to the Wanika alone of the Rabai district, and then the village was small, and the inquirers few; but when Mr. Price came, and brought with him the Nasik boys from Bombay, with their wives and families, the aspect of the place was entirely changed. The village increased in size, and the congregation was considerably swelled; but those who came out from heathenism were very few and far between. The Bombay boys have been variously employed, some in cultivating, some in building, &c., but it was impressed on all of them that they must eventually support themselves entirely. Many of them have been very well behaved and consistent, while others have caused us no little trouble and anxiety; but those among them who are anxious to spread the glad tidings are few indeed.

The few Wanika who have joined us are very different. With one or two exceptions, they are missionaries to their own people; and I might here mention James Mwachingo, who has been the means of bringing his two brothers to join our congregation on Sundays, and, when they can come to live a little nearer, they will join our class of catechumens.

But I intended to speak more of the changes I have found on my return. When I went home in the summer of 1877, I left a comparatively small village, formed of one square, containing from twenty to thirty houses. On my return I find a long street, extending away to the north-west, another to the north-east, another to the south—all the houses built entirely by the Natives themselves. This population is composed of runaway slaves from the Giriama country. At the present rate of increase, the population will soon be very large. The in-coming slaves average about one a day. They

belong to various tribes, and have been bought by the people of Giriama from the Swahilis in exchange for cattle. They appear anxious to learn, and attend church and classes regularly, and, though in Christianity they are hardly yet born, some of them promise very well. This is quite a new feature of the Rabai Mission, and one never thought of, I am sure, by its founders, but one which I firmly believe will redound to the glory of God, not only in the salvation of precious souls, but in the undermining of slavery among the Wanika tribes.

On the eastern side of our village is a little Wanika settlement, composed partly of baptized Wanika, and partly of Wanika who wish to leave their old ways. Here we have the widow of an old convert of Mr. Rebmann's, with her three sons, two of whom are baptized, and the wife and children of the third. Here also is Isaac's father, Abraham Abegonja, with his wife and children, unbaptized, I am sorry to say. Also James Mwachingo, who had the pleasure of seeing his wife and child baptized by Bishop Royston, and several others, most of whom are very regular at all our services.

This constitutes a remarkable change in this place. The number of houses is now more than doubled, and others are springing up every day. Another still more remarkable circumstance is, that this year has seen the first Rabai *women* baptized. In Giriama the women joined along with their husbands, but in Rabai no woman has ever joined until this year, and two of these have joined *before* their husbands.

Our church, though only just finished, is already too small to accommodate our congregation, and, if it goes on increasing at the present rate, I don't know what we shall do, but "the Lord will provide."

Isaac has paid the Godoma Christians two or three visits lately, but now he is stationed here, and we cannot say when he will be able to go there again. I myself hope to be able to pay them a visit at the beginning of the new year. They are in great trouble because no one has been sent to live with them, and they are continually crying out for some one to teach them. They say, "We have bought slates, and now there is no one to teach us to write!" I would strongly advise that some one should be sent there at once, but whom to send I am at a loss to know. Here again, however, "the Lord will provide." He has indeed provided for all our wants hitherto, and He will never forsake us—only, may we devote ourselves more entirely to His glory!

STATISTICS.

Frere Town and Giriama.—Lay Teachers: European, Male, 3; Female, 2; Native Christian, Male, 2; Female, 1. Native Communicants, 45. Native Adherents and their Children, 428. Native Scholars: Boys, 68; Girls, 28; Seminarists, 26. Contributions of Native Christians for religious purposes, $53.

Kisulutini.—European Clergyman, 1. Native Christian Teachers: Male, 2. Native Communicants, 19. Native Christian Adherents and their Children, 180. Native Scholars: Boys, 21; Girls, 15. A very small contribution made to the East African Native Pastorate Fund.

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